DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 363 839 CG 026 022

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TITLE International Counseling: An Opportunity for Culture-Specific Counseling with the New Zealand Maori.
PUB DATE [93]
NOTE 22p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Historical Materials (060)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; *Counseling Techniques; *Cultural Awareness; *Cultural Influences; Dropouts; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Minority Groups; School Counseling; *Student Problems
IDENTIFIERS *Maori (People); *New Zealand

ABSTRACT

Evidence of multiculturalism in New Zealand, populated mainly by the indigenous Maoris and Europeans, has become common throughout the educational system in the last two decades. In spite of efforts at reform, however, Maori leaders contend that the government has consistently failed to meet the needs of Maori students, citing continuing high dropout rates and low academic achievement rates of Maori youth, to support their claims. Many Maoris are, in fact, demanding a separate, alternative education system for their youth. An embedded component of any improved education delivery system for the Maori involves the development of adequate and appropriate guidance and counseling services for Maori youth. A culture-specific model appears to be a most appropriate one. This paper presents an historical review of New Zealand's development as a country, examines the current status of Maori education, and develops a culture-specific counseling model. Opportunities for use of such a culture-specific model with the Maoris of New Zealand are considered and a variety of issues are addressed: the cognitive/learning styles of different subgroups, the assessment of acculturation, a holistic approach to counseling, the significance of bilingualism and one's native language, synergetic counseling, and familial issues. (Author/NB)

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ED 363 839

INTERNATIONAL COUNSELING: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CULTURE-SPECIFIC COUNSELING WITH THE NEW ZEALAND MAORI

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Running Head: INTERNATIONAL COUNSELING

CG026022

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Abstract

Evidence of multiculturalism in New Zealand, populated mainly by the indigenous Maoris and Europeans (Pakehas), has become common throughout the educational system in the last two decades. In spite of efforts at reform, however, Maori leaders contend that the government has consistently failed to meet the needs of Maori students, citing continuing high dropout rates and low academic achievement rates of Maori youth, to support their claims. Many Maoris are, in fact, demanding a separate, alternative educational system for their youth. An embedded component of any improved education delivery system for the Maori involves the development of adequate and appropriate guidance and counseling services for Maori youth. A culture-specific model appears to be a most appropriate one.

International Counseling: An Opportunity for Culture-specific Counseling with the New Zealand Maori

Historically, multiculturalism evolved as a response to the ethnic revitalization movements of the 1960s in Western nations with significant ethnic minority populations (Banks, 1986). No longer willing to accept the discrepancy between professed democratic ideology and reality, ethnic minorities organized and demanded their share of power from those who controlled the institutions and resources of society. A major goal of ethnic reformers became to influence and change educational institutions so they would reflect ethnic diversity and promote equality (Banks & Lynch, 1986). Efforts also addressed the persistent shortcomings of various educational systems in meeting the needs of ethnic minority students (Watson, 1979). The development of multicultural and cross-cultural guidance and counseling services evolved as a concurrent focus of these movements

In New Zealand, a multi-ethnic nation since its founding in 1840, assimilationism was the official governmental policy in education until the 1960s, when integration became the new social goal (Irwin, 1989). Whereas assimilationist policies had promoted the cultural view of the dominant group, integration allowed ethnic minorities to retain some aspects of their cultures while functioning within the accepted mainstream culture. Approximately a decade later, integration was replaced by multiculturalism

which was based on the premise that society was made up of a variety of cultural groups, and that each group made a unique and positive contribution to society as a whole. Multiculturalism also implied ". . . a more equitable allocation of resources and the sharing of power" (Irwin, 1989, p. 4).

Consequently, school curricula and practices were examined and modified to include contributions from the indigenous Maori, the largest ethnic minority group in New Zealand. Teaching of the Maori language became more common and Maoris were encouraged to become teachers. What had come to be known as the "Maori problem" in education was also discussed and debated with great seriousness (Schwimmer, 1968). This problem had no precise definition, but generally had to do with the high dropout rate and low academic achievement of Maori students. Codd (1980) reported, for example, that in 1969, approximately 13% of Maori students graduated with a School Certificate or more, compared to about 47% of non-Maori students. Indeed, over 59% of Maori students left school without marketable skills, compared to 24% of non-Maori students (Codd, 1980). More recent reports indicate that many Maori students quit school at age 15 (Maori Education..., 1991), and lack both oral and literacy skills in English and Maori (Karetu, 1989). In short, many Maori children are not doing well academically. Moreover, many Maoris have developed an ambivalent attitude toward current educational policies, believing that social/economic success requires academic success. However, this academic success is achieved only at the risk of losing distinctively Maori qualities (Walker, 1973).

Not content to wait and see whether multicultural education would improve academic achievement, a number of Maori leaders challenged the government's power to make decisions for their children's education and demanded the resignation of the Education Minister (Hui Compulsion..., 1991). Rather than acceding to the Education Department's call for multicultural education, Maoris advocated a completely separate and parallel educational system (Maori Education..., 1991). The central body behind this separatist move was the Tino Rangatiratanga (self-determination), whose members encouraged each community to develop local education authorities to operate schools exclusively for Maoris. A spokesman for the Tino Rangatiratanga stated: "Our culture, history, will never, never die. We are not looking to take over government. We are looking to take over Maori education" (Start Made..., 1991, p. 9).

Whether or not the Maoris are successful in establishing a separate system of education, the development and enhancement of guidance and counseling delivery systems remains a high priority. Additional discussion of Maori education over the past 150 years may offer a better understanding of the issues at hand, and may prove instructive to policy-makers and practitioners dealing with the perennial dilemma of educating and counseling culturally and ethnically diverse populations.

Historical Antecedents

Although information on New Zealand's early history is fragmented and sketchy, the first Polynesian settlers probably arrived in approximately 800 A.D. Present-day Maori tribes, however, trace their descent from

ancestors who left Hawaiki (in the Society or Marquesas Islands) in approximately 1350 A.D. (Sinclair, 1991). They called their new home Aotearoa or "Land of the Long White Cloud."

Education in the pre-European period was thorough, practical, and, largely, informal. Grandparents taught the children language, stories, myths and legends. Although written languages did not exist, all children were trained to develop their memories, especially with regard to the tribal genealogies (Sinclair, 1991). Parents taught the tasks useful in everyday living. Adolescents who wished to learn skilled crafts such as tattooing, woodcarving, or weaving, were taught by an expert. Boys who had been dedicated at birth to the god of war, Tu, were given military instruction; those dedicated to the god of peace and agriculture, Rongo, learned about the soil, weather, methods of cultivation, and crops (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974). Those young men who were destined to be superior tohungas (priests), and who were usually chiefs as well, received rigorous training in a whare wananga (house of learning) (Sinclair, 1991).

Following the discovery of New Zealand in 1642, and the explorations of James Cook, over a century later, many traders and whalers called on New Zealand ports to obtain provisions and to recruit or shanghai Maori crew members. With the subsequent coming of missionaries, European-style schools were established for Maori children as early as 1816, reaching their zenith during the early 1840s. As Maoris passed through these schools, they returned to their villages and opened schools of their own.

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By 1840 there were few, if any, villages without some literate inhabitants (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974).

In 1840, the Treaty of Waitangi ceded Maori authority to the Queen of England and allowed her the sole right to purchase their lands. In return, the Queen gave ". . . to the Natives of New Zealand Her royal protection, and . . . all the rights and privileges of British subjects" (McIntyre & Gardner, 1971, p. 117). The treaty represented, at least in spirit, the basis for two widely diverse cultures (the Maori and the English) to ". . . live together in amity" (Sinclair, 1991, p. 73). The British government's liberal outlook was evident in its stated policies on education such as ". . . the education of the youth among the aborigines is, of course, indispensable to the success of any measures for their ultimate advancement in the social arts and in the scale of their political existence" (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974, p. v.). Four years later, the Native Trust Ordinance reinforced this policy stating that ". . . the native people of New Zealand are by natural endowment apt for the acquirement of the arts and habits of civilized life and are capable of great moral and social advancement" (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974, p. v.).

To implement these policies, the Government of New Zealand encouraged the establishment of schools for Maori children. From 1840 to the 1860s, these schools were run by Anglican, Catholic, and Methodist missionaries and supported financially by the Government. With the enactment of the Native Schools Act in 1867, however, provisions were made for the establishment and maintenance of a separate system of Maori schools under

the auspices of the Department of Native Affairs. Some Maori children also attended primary schools with European children. In either case, the education which they received was assimilationist in nature, for the prevalent belief was that European culture was superior, and members of the indigenous culture were to adopt it as quickly as possible.

The Maoris showed great respect for literacy and were eager students, perhaps because they saw literacy as a way to understand a world which was being changed so greatly by the Europeans. Literacy affected Maori communities in three ways: (a) it led to the formation of discussion and study groups which became part of village social life; (b) those who mastered reading and writing achieved a new kind of status; and (c) their prestige began to erode the status of the traditional Maori leaders. Outside of Maori society, however, this literacy did little to help the Maori understand the world, as that literacy, prior to 1858, was in Maori, not in English. The policy of not teaching Maoris English and of providing only the Bible for them to read had the effect of ". . . cutting them off. . . from every species of information not presented by and through the missionaries" (Brown, 1845, p. 100).

In 1879, the Education Department took over the direct control of 57 Maori village schools and ran them as a self-contained national system, separate from the regional education boards which administered New Zealand's state primary schools (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974). This was viewed as a temporary measure; however, the last of these Maori schools

were not transferred from control by the Education Department until 1969 (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974).

During the 90 year period of separatism, the education provided by the Native Schools evolved and developed differently from that provided by the public schools. The latter made no modifications in their programs to accommodate the Maori children attending them. Public school teachers were invariably Pakehas, and saw and knew little of Maori culture and family life. The Maori language was neither taught nor encouraged at school (Irwin, 1989). Maori culture, in general, was not highly valued, and communication between teacher and student was often poor (Irwin, 1989).

In the Native Schools, Maori culture was initially minimized or excluded from the curricula; however, the negative effects of this policy soon became apparent. Consequently, the Native Schools modified their programs and extended their activities to bring the whole Maori community within their spheres of influence. Schools became centers for demonstrating new crops and trees, and for teaching improved agricultural techniques. In the twentieth century, the curriculum was further modified to include more handwork, drawing, agriculture, domestic science and health courses. Changes which reflected John Dewey's philosophy were encouraged. Teacher competence was improved by offering frequent refresher courses, encouraging discussion groups on educational topics, and by starting a "Native Schools" column in the Education Gazette, where teachers shared ideas on improving instruction (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974).

Important demographic trends after 1936 brought about significant changes in Maori education. Enrollment of Maori children in the public primary schools increased while that in the Native Schools decreased significantly. As early as 1960, the great majority of Maori students were in the public schools, both primary and secondary (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974). A major review of Maori educational policies led to the transfer, in 1969, of the last of the Maori schools to the regional education boards which ran the public schools. All schools with large numbers of Maori students were given special staffing, including part-time help for remedial teaching and advisory help with language problems. Revisions were made in the curricula to reflect contributions from Maori culture, and a new emphasis was placed on teaching the Maori language in both primary and secondary schools. These developments ". . . strengthened the confidence of many Maoris that genuine attempts were being made to promote activities beneficial to their welfare" (Barrington & Beaglehole, 1974, p. 259).

Current Status of Maori Education

The Maori problem in education continues regardless of governmental reform efforts over two decades. The failure of the educational system to meet the needs of Maori students has been attributed to a wide variety of factors. Cazden's research (1990) indicates that differential treatment of Maori youth, the unequal participation of children in classroom lessons, and different learning styles may be important factors. Gilling (1990) contends that limited access to bilingual education programs has retarded

Maori academic progress and that the education system is still largely monocultural.

Whatever the causes may be, leaders of the Maori community are calling for genuine change, rather than superficial or half-hearted attempts, in the educational system. In fact, they are advocating ". . . the withdrawal from that which was seen to have consistently failed the Maori people over the history of its development" (Ten points..., 1991, p. 13). The threat of setting up an alternative and separate educational system based on the Kohanga Reo, the Maori pre-school language nests, has stirred the Education Ministry to propose a ten-point plan for Maori education. This plan includes removing ". . . barriers to Maori achievement in the schools, offering bicultural perspectives in the classroom, improving school-home relations, and supporting Maori language programs" (Ten points..., 1991, p. 13). Whether this attempt will be successful remains to be seen. Regardlessly, the human development and growth needs of Maori children need to be addressed more appropriately. To that end, a culture-specific model of counseling and guidance services appears to be both appropriate and adequate.

The Culture-Specific Model

The perception that counseling in the U. S. is superior to any other system in the world is an erroneous one. As cultures and social conditions vary country to country, so do counseling practices. Three factors are imperative for a balanced study of counseling in a particular country: bilingual counselors, native participants, and individuals who are

knowledgeable about the culture (Locke, 1992). In studying counseling from an international perspective, professionals must avoid ethnocentrism and view topics within the framework of the culture in which it exists.

Culture-specific counseling serves to augment cross-cultural and multicultural approaches with specific ethnic cultures and subgroups. This model is extremely efficacious as it starts with a specific culture and its peoples and then seeks to incorporate natural helping styles to facilitate personal growth. The application of anthropological constructs attempts to discover a more culturally sensitive approach to counseling theory, to training in counseling skills and knowledge, and in using evaluative research techniques for the cultural group.

The procedures for this model are relatively simple and straightforward. The first step requires an individual or group from the culture to examine key aspects of the culture in consultation with other members of that culture. This dialogue will yield culture-specific information that will be used in the subsequent development of training materials and resources.

The second step involves generating training materials based on the analysis of the culture via the first step. As an example, the Culture Specific Rating Scale (CSRS) (Nwachuku & Ivey, 1991) can be used to acquire data from a review of literature and the initial analysis of Maori culture. A multiple-item Maori CSRS may then be generated which covers basic issues of helping and counseling that might appear in naturalistic Maori problem-solving situations requiring counseling and assistance. Additionally,

video vignettes of the Maori presenting problems can be presented while observers classify their responses according to listening or attending skills and how they focused their conceptualizations of the client's problem. A most effective method would involve the use of effective (using a Maori counselor) and ineffective training (using a non-Maori (Western) counselor) tapes.

The culture-specific model appears to integrate (a) a clear systematic framework for teaching conceptual cultural specifics of a group or people, and equally important, counseling behaviors appropriate to different cultures; (b) a way to build training in cultural differences into counseling and educational programs using well-known and established technologies of both microskills and workshop design; and (c) a specific set of evaluation technologies tied to the original conceptions of the culture.

Opportunities for a Culture-Specific Counseling Model

Historical attempts to assimilate, to separate, then to integrate Maori culture, in both educational and social areas, have resulted in the inappropriate and inadequate delivery of services to a unique cultural group. Efforts to address these concerns have been few and inadequate. The following opportunities are offered as alternative avenues to the current education and counseling dissemination policies of the New Zealand government to Maori children. These opportunities are easily facilitated by and incorporated into a culture-specific model of psychological services.

Cognitive/Learning Styles

Between-group differences suggest that learning style is influenced by cultural differences. In essence, learning styles are individual rather than stereotypical group styles (Dunn, 1990; Griggs & Dunn, 1989). Counselor accommodation of the learning style strengths of Maori youth within various cultural groups should result in improved achievement of counseling goals and increased Maori satisfaction with counseling. Maori students have to be taught in sociological patterns in which they feel comfortable. For example, prescribing cooperative or competitive learning for all Maoris is to consider individual Maoris' unique differences.

Assessment of Acculturation

The historical experiences of assimilation for the Maori indicate that an appropriate counseling process would be the assessment of acculturation for Maori students. Several tools are available for this endeavor. For example, the Index of Contact (de Lacey, 1970) is a general contact index developed for Australian Aboriginal children with white Australian society. This index illustrates how acculturation may be assessed at the individual level, but the actual items will vary depending on population and research goals. Overall, the best known scale is the Modernity Scale of Inkeles and Smith (1974). This instrument assesses the individual modernity of persons who are experiencing acculturation and which exhibit assimilation assumptions. Discernment of the degree of acculturation provides the counselor with data pertinent to counseling style modality; that is, whether to address the individual Maori

from a monocultural or bicultural perspective.

Holistic Approach

A most effective counseling orientation for the Maori would involve a holistic approach (i.e., all four primary dimensions of being: body, mind, spirit, and emotions). Holistic counseling gives credence to the integration and interrelatedness of the various dimensions of human beings (Gilchrist, 1992). The Maori culture appreciates the contributions of these dimensions. Through the awareness of the Maori student's status within each primary realm, counselors acknowledge the wholeness of the Maori. Most important is that the Maori student is heard and respected in all dimensions.

Bilingual/Native Language

Again, the historical significance of education via Native language influences appropriate counseling with the Maori. Substantial research supports teaching language-minority children in their native language and suggests that bilingualism is a cognitive asset (Hakuta & Gould, 1987). Ethnographic research has shown that classroom strategies are most successful when matched with the children's cultural style of interaction (McLaughlin, 1985). In addition, multicultural and cross-cultural counseling effectiveness is enhanced when the counselor uses methods and strategies and defines goals consistent with the life experiences and cultural values of the client (Sue, 1992). The Maori value their native language as documented by their resistance to instruction only in English.

Synergetic Counseling

Counselors must be able to shift their counseling styles to meet not just the developmental needs of the Maori but also the cultural dimensions. Recognition that no one style of counseling is appropriate for all populations and situations is essential. For example, recent comparison research by Peabody (1985) concluded that psychological characteristics of national groups tended to have comparative differences on the basis of (a) social relationships, (b) social rules, (c) control of hostility, (d) impulse control, and (e) authority and hierarchical relations. Clearly the variations in how each of these differences is reinforced and portrayed in a particular nation is internalized by many, if not most, of the individuals in that national group. Thus, modal behavior for one national group is likely to be different from that for other groups.

Consequently, synergetic counseling and guidance approaches appear to be the most effective for unique ethnic minorities such as the Maori. The synthesis of helping approaches with cultural/environmental factors avoids the pitfalls presented by relying on a singular approach. The major inherent feature in synergism is "... that of the counselor and client working and cooperating together through the process that is most effective for them and towards the goals that are most important for or relevant to the client in his or her cultural environment" (Axelson, 1985, p. 336).

Familial Influences

The Maori familial style contributes greatly to their perceptions of emotional well being. The continuing and inter- generational effects that

family background transmits or reinforces is reflected in the formation of values; orientation to the past, present, and future; ways of viewing and interacting with strangers and persons beyond the family boundaries; interpretations of obligations and responsibilities to others; views of work, marriage, and childrearing; problem definition and appropriate solutions; and ways of coping with a cultural identity (McGoldrick, Pearce, & Giordano, 1982). All of these effects are found in the Maori culture.

For example, mental health, psychological disorders, and behavioral norms are all cultural constructions and highly influenced by familial patterns. These norms have to do with varying patterns of living that have eroded from different historical and philosophical factors. Thus familial behavior quite consistent with expected behavioral models in one nation may contrast with that expected in another nation. Similarly, counseling theories carry within their assumptions the seeds of expected behavior and normative models that do not fit the culturally mediated behavior of all nations (Herr, 1987).

Conclusion

Some critics maintain that although New Zealand is able to provide an appropriate educational response to the challenge of ethnic diversity in the classroom, it has remained "... arrogantly monocultural" (Gilling, 1990, p. 5). Educational planners and practitioners of multicultural programs should be watching developments in New Zealand closely. If the educational and counseling needs of ethnic minorities in countries other than New Zealand are not dealt with effectively, these groups may become

disaffected as well, and establish educational systems outside of the usual institutional contexts. This new educational separatism will, no doubt, have widespread consequences for the other institutions of these societies, and may, in fact, restructure them in totally unforeseen ways. Regardless of governmental decisions, the Maori will be affected and this may be more important. As has been stated often, "When students cannot learn the way we teach them, we must teach them the way they learn." A more applicable case may not be found than that of the Maori of New Zealand.

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